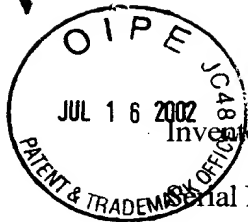


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#103/BM  
729-02



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor: Ball et al.

Serial No: 09/530,342

Filing Date: 4/27/00

Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD  
FOR DRAWING WAVEGUIDE  
FIBERS

Group Art Unit: 1731

Examiner: J. Hoffmann

REPLY

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

RESPONSE TO THE EXAMINER'S OFFICE ACTION

In reply to the Final Office Action dated April 4, 2002, designated as Paper No.9 in the above-captioned application, please enter the following amendments and Remarks as follows:

OK TO ENTER  
DO NOT ENTER  
8-1-02

In the Claims

RECEIVED  
JUL 24 2002  
TC 1700

Please replace claim 6 with the following amended claim:

6. (second amendment) A method for producing a waveguide fiber in a draw furnace including a graphite, generally tubular muffle having an inner surface comprising the steps of:

providing a high purity silicon carbide coating on the inner surface of the graphite muffle wherein the high purity silicon carbide coating contains less than about 900 parts per billion of impurities and the muffle comprises at least two separate, interconnected generally tubular sections;

disposing waveguide fiber preform in the muffle;

heating the furnace to a temperature sufficient to draw fiber from the preform;  
and drawing fiber from the preform